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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 NEW DELHI 008020

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [PINR](#) [PK](#) [IN](#)

SUBJECT: NARAYANAN TELLS PISTOLE INDIA SEEKS TERRORIST
INTERCEPTS

Classified By: Amb. David Mulford for Reasons 1.4 (B, D)

11. (S) Summary: In a frank November 27th discussion with FBI Deputy Director Pistole, National Security Advisor Narayanan explained that while the overall intelligence relationship had improved, the U.S. could only strengthen its counter-terrorism cooperation with India by sharing signals intelligence or its ability to de-encrypt intercepts that India believes the U.S. has. Ambassador Mulford and Deputy Director Pistole pressed Narayanan to allow the U.S. to work with India on investigations of attacks and in joint counter-terrorism operations, but NSA Narayanan said this was sensitive politically to India's minority Muslim population and implied that such joint investigations could only work once U.S. intelligence sharing is strengthened. End Summary.

Improving Intelligence Sharing

12. (S) NSA Narayanan began the discussion with Ambassador and FBI Deputy Director Pistole on a positive note, explaining that there have been much better relations between U.S. and Indian intelligence agencies because some overall improvements in the relationship have allowed some of India's previous reservations to decrease. He challenged, however, the U.S. and India to act in a much more direct and intimate manner. He framed the discussion by asking Deputy Director Pistole why the U.S. has been so successful in preventing a second large-scale attack on U.S. soil after Sept. 11, 2001. On a day to day basis, he asked, what have you done that we have not done?

13. (S) Pistole explained that while some of this was a matter of good fortune, the FBI has refocused in the last five years on analysis and increased sharing of information with state and local law enforcement and other agencies, making it possible to gather and disseminate information faster and to the right people. He also emphasized that the FBI has had several successful prosecutions of Lashkar-i-Taiba members in the United States, including those arrested in Lodi, California. He stated that the U.S. wants to be able to share information with India's Intelligence Bureau, and asked what more the U.S. can do to strengthen its counter-terror cooperation with India.

Asking for SIGINT

14. (S) NSA Narayanan relayed that on average India receives about 20 to 25 pieces of intelligence daily on terrorist attack planning in India, and India has a whole list of suspects' phone numbers that police officials monitor. He asked if the U.S. picks up further information. He said, to be frank, this is the area where the U.S. could most help India. He said, "obviously" the U.S. has trouble sharing some information because of relations with Pakistan, but India is only asking for information about terrorist activity. He qualified that India is not asking for Pakistani troop movements, just information about terrorism. He explained that India can't decrypt substantial numbers of these intercepts, but he believes that the National Security Agency has that capability. He added that if the U.S. could provide that information, it would be most useful.

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Preemption, he said, was the most important part of counter-terror operations, but India can't be successful against terrorists without this information. In the past, he opined, India got a tremendous amount of information from the British about what was planned in Europe, but this information is no longer coming. He said that this has become more and more important as terrorism has become more international in scope, with operations planned in country A, logistics planned in country B, and financing coming from country C. He said he likes to quote Pakistani President Musharraf's phrase that these were "freelance terrorists" when he discusses this issue. He challenged that India can do little with human intelligence, but that it could do far more with access to signals intelligence.

15. (S) Pistole explained that while sigint has been useful in the past to the FBI, human intelligence has been the most useful to our success against terrorists. He said that the FBI rarely comes across information from sigint that would be actionable about attacks in India coming out of the U.S. He offered, however, that if Indian officials have specific numbers they can share with the legal attache, the FBI can do searches on the information and pass it back to India.

16. (S) NSA Narayanan agreed that there was good intelligence sharing about terrorist attack planning. For example, he said when the U.S. had specific information about planned attacks on India's nuclear facilities, there was good intelligence sharing. He said, however, that India is asking for more than this. India wants information not just on specific attacks. He said there is a sense that there is something missing when information is conveyed to Indian officials. Although he conveyed his thanks that there has been good cooperation so far, he explained that Indian intelligence officers may have information because of their geographical expertise that they can add to the more detailed information the U.S. has, making analysis better for both sides.

Offering U.S. Help with Investigations

17. (S) Ambassador Mulford pressed NSA Narayanan to accept

closer U.S. cooperation with India's counter-terrorism operations. He said the exchange of information is very important, but so is the chance to work together to look at these issues. If you want to break down perceived biases, he explained, we need to have people working together at the ground level and sharing their experiences.

¶18. (S) Pistole further urged Narayanan to accept FBI help with Indian police investigations after terrorist attacks. We can offer a lot of expert help with your forensic work, he said, -- including analyzing fibers and soil samples -- but we do not get a lot of details about these investigations now. We only get press information about this police work. He said we could work together if there is another attack, but only if the U.S. can add value to your investigations. He explained that for example, after a recent bombing in Saudi Arabia in which several Americans were killed, the FBI provided help to Saudi authorities, but only where they could make a positive contribution. The U.S. was not simply looking for information that could be used in prosecutions.

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Limits to Cooperation

¶19. (S) Narayanan, however, responded that this level of cooperation could only be achieved down the road, not yet. He said there were still limits to the relationship, because each country still has reservations. He said, for example, that the U.S. would not allow India to join its police investigations. Turning to MEA Joint-Secretary (Americas) S. Jaishankar, he indicated that with the civilian-nuclear deal, the US-India relationship may be strengthened. To be frank, he explained further, the minority Muslim population in India is very sensitive and he doesn't want any joint investigations to get caught up in a "clash of civilizations." Intercepts, he reemphasized, are the most important issue for India.

Trust Deficit

¶10. (S) Comment: NSA Narayanan's pointed comments are indicative of Indian thinking overall about intelligence sharing. Indian officials continue to evaluate their ability to trust the U.S. by how forthcoming we can be about information we have, especially with regard to intelligence about terrorist activity originating in Pakistan. Although some of Narayanan's reluctance to allow an FBI presence in Indian investigations comes from political sensitivity and India's traditional desire to go it alone, because of the U.S. relationship with Pakistan, New Delhi apparently remains skeptical of U.S. resolve to help prevent terrorist attacks on Indian soil.

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